

Appln No. 10/650,679

Amendment under Rule 116 in Reply to Office action dated Aug. 26, 2005

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Listing of claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Claim 1 (Currently amended): Apparatus for transfer of containers between a land-based vehicle and a dockside location, comprising: a wheeled conveyor moved to a an operational position underlying a terminal crane at said dockside location; roller track means mounted on the wheeled conveyor for establishing thereon a central passage lane aligned below said terminal crane in said operational position of the apparatus to guide along which movement of the containers is effected therefrom between a pair of end passage lanes in laterally spaced relation to the central passage lane; and container spreader means mounted on the wheeled conveyor above said end passage lanes for effecting said movement lateral-guided displacement of the containers laterally between said central passage lane established by the roller track means and the end passage lanes along which the land-based vehicle may travel without obstruction into the wheeled conveyor.

Claim 2 (Currently amended): The apparatus as defined in claim 1, wherein said wheeled conveyor comprises: a central crane unit interconnected between opposite end crane units; ~~on~~ which said container spreader means is being mounted only on said end crane units; and alignment guide means mounted on the central crane unit for operative positioning of the wheeled conveyor at said dockside location.

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Claim 3 (Previously presented): The apparatus as defined in claim 2, wherein said opposite end crane units respectively extend laterally beyond the central crane unit to establish the end passage lanes extending therethrough.

Claim 4 (Previously presented): The apparatus as defined in claim 2 wherein said opposite end crane units respectively extend laterally beyond the central crane unit to establish the end passage lanes therethrough.

Claim 5 (Currently amended): The apparatus as defined in claim 3, including hopper guide means mounted on the central crane unit for vertical transfer of the containers ~~to and from~~ between the wheeled conveyor and the terminal crane at said dockside location.

Claim 6 (Currently amended): A method for transfer of containers between a land-based vehicle and a dockside location, comprising the steps of: positioning a common track passage lane of predetermined length in alignment below a marine terminal crane for movement of along ~~which the containers are moved therealong~~; establishing two parallel spaced passage lanes on opposite sides of the positioned common track passage lane along which the land-based vehicle may approach and depart without obstruction; laterally transferring the containers between the land-based vehicle and the positioned common track passage lane at longitudinally spaced locations thereon; and transferring the containers between the marine terminal crane and ~~to and from~~ the positioned common track passage lane in a vertical direction at said dockside location between said longitudinally spaced locations.

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Claim 7 (Currently amended): The method as defined in claim 6, wherein said land-based vehicle is a truck having a chassis on which the containers are carried; and said transferring of the containers in the vertical direction being effected by means of said a marine terminal crane at the dockside location.